

STUDIES IN THE FLORA OF ARABIA: I

A botanical bibliography of the Arabian peninsula

Compiled by

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ABSTRACT. A selective botanical bibliography of the Arabian peninsula is presented. It is primarily floristic and taxonomic in content, but fairly comprehensive in such allied topics as plant geography, ecology and botanical travel. The paper is divided into three sections dealing with: I, the flowering plants and ferns of the area; II, cryptogams; III, some of the more important references to adjacent countries. In many cases, short annotations are added to the references to give a clearer indication of content.

In recent years there has been an increasing awareness among botanists, ecologists, conservationists, agriculturists, and anyone trying to name plants from the Arabian peninsula, that a comprehensive Flora of the whole area is very much needed. Indeed throughout south-west Asia, it is almost the only region which has always lacked an all-embracing Flora. In the hope that such a Flora project will shortly become formalized, a botanical bibliography of the peninsula has been prepared. It covers Saudi Arabia, Yemen Arab Republic, People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (including Socotra), Sultanate of Oman, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain and Kuwait. Complementary to this paper will be one by G. E. Wickens on the botanical collectors of the same area (Studies in the flora of Arabia III).

The botanical literature of Arabia is very scattered and covers a long period of time. The earliest known mention of its plants and vegetation dates from the time of Abu Hanifah al-Dinawari who died about AD 895. His field observations on where plants grew in the desert and how frequent they were still have a modern-day relevance and reflect the age-long dependence of man and his animals on the plants of this frequently most inhospitable environment. Although we have cited a few of these early works, such as we are aware of, the bibliography is not intended to be in any way comprehensive or historical. It is essentially floristic and taxonomic. We have not attempted, however, to cite all works in which there is a reference to an Arabian plant; that is, monographs and revisions are not listed unless the group has a major development in Arabia. We have made an attempt to cover all taxonomic papers after 1970, which give information about Arabian taxa.

In order to make the bibliography more useful, and hopefully more readable, we have added in many cases a brief comment about the contents, unless they are already quite clear from the title of the paper.

As a further stage towards embarking on a Flora, botanists at Edinburgh and Kew have been preparing check-lists of the constituent families. These list the species (with restricted synonymy) and the countries where they occur. In compiling these check-lists, the following references are the most useful starting points (full citations are given in sect. I below): Blatter (1919-36), Boulos (1978), Dickson & Macksad (1973), Forbes (1903), Mandaville (1977), Migahid (1978), Popov (1957), Schwartz (1939), Vierhapper (1907) and Zohary et al. (1980). Also useful are: Halwagy & Macksad (1972), Khattab & El-Hadidi (1971) and Zohary (1957).

Almost as important as the previous references are those which deal with adjacent countries or areas. The following, listed in sect. III, are all of importance: *Adumbratio Florae Aethiopiae* (1953—), Cufodontis (1953–72), *Flora of Egypt* (1981—), *Flora of Iraq* (1966—), *Flora of Libya* (1976—), *Flora of Tropical East Africa* (1952—), Nasir & Ali (1970—), Rechinger (1963—, 1964), Täckholm (1974), and Zohary & Feinbrun-Dothan (1966—).

Sect. II of the bibliography deals with cryptogams. Here the literature is, not surprisingly, less than for the phanerogams.

All lists of references are inevitably incomplete as soon as they are published, both because the compilers have missed some and because new papers are continually appearing. This one is certainly no exception and a supplement seems inevitable within the not-too-distant future. In particular we had considerable difficulties in obtaining some of the journals and papers produced by the scientific institutes and natural history societies of the Arabian area.

We should appreciate reprints of all future relevant papers and welcome a note of our errors and omissions.

I: GENERAL SECTION

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II: CRYPTOGAMS

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